

Jackie Lacey

District Attorney

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NEWS RELEASE

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Ex-State Inspector Pleads Guilty to Accepting Bribes From LA County Barbershop Owners

A former state inspector pleaded guilty today to accepting about \$12,000 in bribes from barbershop and salon owners in exchange for not reporting violations to a regulatory board, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Michell DeGrate, 49, entered an open plea to 13 felony counts of bribery. The open plea means a sentence was not negotiated with the District Attorney's Office.

She was immediately sentenced to 20 days in jail and placed on formal probation for five years. She also was ordered to perform 200 hours of community service and to pay \$12,000 in restitution.

Deputy District Attorney Susan Ser of the Public Integrity Division prosecuted the case.

DeGrate worked as an inspector for the California Department of Consumer Affairs Board of Barbering and Cosmetology. She visited various businesses to ensure they complied with state health and safety laws and licensing requirements.

DeGrate targeted barbershops and nail and hair salons in her inspection territory last year. She demanded cash from owners and employees in exchange for not reporting any violations if they paid her. In some instances, workers made monthly payments to DeGrate, the prosecutor said.

Case BA462094 was investigated by the California Department of Consumer Affairs.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.